

Miss North Carolina USA in 1982, and her sister, Julia Dalton, served as Miss North Carolina Teen USA in 2008 and as second runner-up in the Miss Teen USA pageant.

Madam Speaker, dedicated service to others combined with dynamic leadership has been the embodiment of Miss Dalton's life and qualities that the Miss USA pageant upholds in selecting its winners. May we all wish Miss Dalton the very best in her quest for the Miss Universe title, in addition to using her selflessness, tenacity and integrity as a beacon of direction, and example of dedication, and a source of inspiration. Indeed, may God bless Miss Dalton and her time serving our country as Miss USA 2009.

HONORING SSGT. RICHARD
HOWARD HEMENWAY

HON. MARK H. SCHAUER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. SCHAUER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor SSGT. Richard Howard Hemenway, Jr. of the 110th Fighter Wing Chaplain's Office in Battle Creek, Michigan on the occasion of his retirement. SSGT. Hemenway has been a dedicated member of the armed forces for 21 years, five of which were active duty, including four tours to the Middle East. He was commended twice for this service, among many other honors. In October of 2000, SSGT. Hemenway was presented the Leadership Award by his peers for Outstanding Academic and Leadership Performance Air Force Sergeants Association Cereal City Chapter 774. In 2005, SSGT. Hemenway was named Base Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. He has done all of this as a loving husband to his wife, Kathy, and dedicated father to his children. SSGT. Richard Howard Hemenway, Jr. is a model of patriotism and well deserves our respect and appreciation for his many years of dedication and distinguished service.

ON THE PASSING OF AMBASSADOR
SARATA OTTRA ZIRIGNON-TOURE

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I report to the House of Representatives that Cote d'Ivoire's roving Ambassador Sarata Ottra Zirignon-Toure suddenly passed away on April 9, 2009. I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Ambassador Zirignon-Toure on the establishing the Congressional Caucus on Cote d'Ivoire. She proved instrumental in the establishment of the Caucus, which focuses on issues in West Africa, specifically the pending elections and peace efforts in Cote d'Ivoire.

For decades Ambassador Zirignon-Toure has been at the forefront of Cote d'Ivoire's political landscape—as a freedom fighter, advocate for democracy and leader in the women's movement. Her commitment landed her in jail in 1970 with a group of fellow activists who are now key members of government, includ-

ing President Laurent Gbagbo. When their party, the Ivorian Popular Front, was recognized as the official opposition in 1990, she was named to the shadow cabinet, eventually receiving the foreign affairs portfolio.

A linguist, teacher and child psychologist by training, Ambassador Zirignon-Toure served President Gbagbo as deputy chief of staff since his election in 2000. She served as a roving envoy and troubleshooter with a special focus on relations with the United States. Her academic credentials include degrees and diplomas earned in the United Kingdom and Cote d'Ivoire. She worked for several years as a translator in New York and for the U.S. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service at the embassy in Abidjan.

Her intellect and leadership is most certainly a loss to Cote d'Ivoire and the United States. She will be remembered for her powerful advocacy in the United States on behalf of all Ivorian people.

On behalf of the Congressional Caucus on Cote d'Ivoire, I offer my sincere condolences to Ambassador Zirignon-Toure's family, President Gbagbo and the people of Cote d'Ivoire.

A TRIBUTE TO RICHARD L.
TALBOTT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleague Congresswoman ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, to recognize Richard L. Talbott, Regional Manager for the Readjustment Counseling Service, Pacific Western Region within the Department of Veterans Affairs, and congratulate him as he approaches his retirement this June and thank him for his outstanding service to our nation's military veterans.

Dick served our country with honor as a member of the US Army, 9th Infantry Division and from 1968 to 1969 fought in Vietnam. Following his release from active duty, Dick began his VA career. He first joined the San Diego VA Medical Center, Psychology Department and in 1988 he became a counselor at the Escondido Vet Center. Dick was soon promoted to the position of Team Leader, a position he held from 1990 through 1993. It was during this period that Dick also served as the Executive Director and CEO of the Vietnam Veterans of San Diego (VUSD), and co-authored a "how to" manual on Stand Down for homeless veterans. It was largely due to Dick's tireless efforts and his keen sense of purpose that the program was deemed a huge success, as he more than doubled the residential services capacity for homeless veterans and was the primary negotiator in securing nearly \$2 million for expanded homeless veteran services related to the base closure process in San Diego. The Stand Down as developed in San Diego, has been replicated by agencies across our country and is considered by experts in the field, a stellar program for providing a wide range of services to our homeless and at risk veterans.

It was at this time that Dick also took on the responsibilities of Regional Manager for the Readjustment Counseling Service. Since assuming this position, he has been responsible

for the oversight and operation of thirty-two highly successful Vet Centers throughout California, Hawaii, Oregon, and the Territory of Guam.

Madam Speaker, we invite our colleagues to join us in also thanking Dick's wife Maureen, his daughter Megan and son Michael for the sacrifices they have undoubtedly made during the span of his career. We join today with his family, colleagues, friends, and most importantly with the men and women of our veteran communities across the nation who have benefited most from his work, in recognizing, celebrating and sincerely thanking Richard L. Talbott for a remarkable career.

IN RECOGNITION OF EVA
PLASCENCIA

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the distinguished service of Eva Plascencia. After 30 years with the Internal Revenue Service, she continues to dedicate herself to her career of service.

Eva was born in Clovis, California on September 25, 1956 to Roy Woodley and Juanita Tovar. She graduated from James Logan High School in Union City, California in 1974. In 1979, she married Robert T. Plascencia and their marriage blessed them with three daughters. She is most proud of the fact that all of her children have earned college degrees. Personally, Eva enjoys arts and crafts, sewing and spending time with her grandson Joshua Diego Ojeda.

Mrs. Plascencia began her career with the Internal Revenue Service on January 17, 1978 as a Career Conditional Appointment Clerk—GS03. Since then Eva has worked hard to advance into many different positions and levels within the IRS. Her commitment to learning new policies, honing her skills, and taking on new challenges provided her the opportunity to progress on a yearly basis within the Service. Her most recent positions where in 1998 when she was promoted into Accounting and in 2006 when she moved into the Collections department as a GS8.

Throughout her career at the Internal Revenue Service, Mrs. Eva Plascencia is well known for her hard work ethic and determination. As she celebrates her 30 years of service, I wish her continued success and good luck in all her future endeavors.

HONORING SCHULER'S
RESTAURANT AND PUB

HON. MARK H. SCHAUER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. SCHAUER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Schuler's Restaurant & Pub in Marshall, Michigan as they celebrate 100 years of dedicated service. Schuler's was opened in 1909 by Albert Schuler, Sr. and is a family-owned restaurant. Four generations of Schuler's have built the family reputation and have helped to maintain traditions that grow

out of good, honest work and a love of food, people, and the community. Along the way, each generation has shown a flair for imagination and innovation in the hospitality and food industry. In an era of many constant challenges that face our daily lives, the tireless efforts of establishments like Schuler's help to make our community, state and country an outstanding place to live and work. It is with deep appreciation of the significance of this milestone that I commend Schuler's Restaurant & Pub as they celebrate 100 years of exemplary service to the Marshall community and the State of Michigan.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MIRIAM
WITHERSPOON

HON. ARTUR DAVIS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to extend my condolences to the family of Miriam Witherspoon, a city council member whose death on April 21 is being mourned by the entire city of Birmingham, Alabama. Ms. Witherspoon was a note of grace in Birmingham politics: if you knew her, you had to appreciate that she was genuinely kind and generous in a profession known more for its sharp edges.

Miriam was the kind of individual who excelled at whatever she did. Academically, that meant graduating with high honors from Alabama A&M, and second in her class at Miles Law School. Professionally, it meant crafting a career as one of the leading experts on elder law in the state of Alabama. Politically, it meant forging a political career in her adopted community of Birmingham on her own, independent terms. She lost her first council race, but came back so strong that in 2005, she won easily, the only non-incumbent to win outright without a runoff. Miriam won the confidence of her peers so quickly that in her first days, they elected her president pro tempore of the council.

Miriam Witherspoon happened to have a disability. An automobile accident twenty-one years ago ruined her spinal cord. Her spirit only grew stronger. When she entered public life, disabled citizens in Birmingham finally had their voice. Miriam pushed Birmingham and its city buildings to live up to the obligations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. When told that following the law cost money, her answer was, in effect, "we are Americans by way of Birmingham, Alabama, and we belong here too". Her passion reminded us that Birmingham of all places has no business keeping people out.

She goes home to rest now, having fought the good fight. Her legacy will be the people she inspired, who used to have an excuse for why they couldn't compete or excel. That is, they had an excuse until the moment they met Miriam Witherspoon, and felt the spirit that was standing upright around her wheelchair.

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, the Los Angeles basin holds one of the greatest concentrations of humanity in the world. People have come from all over the Earth to live there—when one walks down a street in Glendale or Alhambra one can hear a language from ten thousand miles away on one block and read signs in a vastly different language on the next. But if you look up a little higher, above the signs and above the buildings, you'll see gray-green mountains looking down on it all. In my district, we're right up against the Verdugo, Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains, and they surprise you all the time, appearing at street corners from behind the buildings, playing hide-and-seek with intervening hills and highways.

Though few of my constituents live up there, I try to get up into the hills as often as I can, and I'm often surprised by how many of my neighbors I run into on the trail. I think that, like me, they wander in the chaparral and oak forests to get away for a while, and find some perspective in the process. Among the families, teenagers and retirees I pass, I see all of the cultures I know from the streets of my district, all enjoying the fact that they can find some peace and quiet just a few minutes away from one of the largest cities in the world.

Our green spaces play an irreplaceable role in our communities, and on this Earth Day, I would like to celebrate them. This is a day to think globally, but it is also a day to act locally, by taking your family to the park and exploring all that you find there. In the words of John Muir, "When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

A TRIBUTE TO RON SAILOR

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the dedication, service and commitment of Ron Sailor to the veterans of Maine.

Ron was born in Orono, Maine, and is a graduate of George Stevens Academy in Blue Hill. He attended Husson College and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in accounting in 1968. He then briefly worked for Great Northern Paper Company and the Internal Revenue Service.

Ron served 32 years in the Maine Air National Guard, attaining the rank of Colonel. He served in a number of roles, including Chief of Staff to the Adjutant General, Public Affairs Officer, and Director of Operations and Training.

Like so many veterans across our nation, Ron's service did not end when he took off his uniform. Following his Maine Air National Guard service, Ron became active in the American Legion, serving as Orono Post 84 Commander, the Penobscot County Vice

Commander and the Department of Maine Commander.

For the past 10 years, Ron has served as the Adjutant for the Department of Maine. Throughout his service to the American Legion, he has worked tirelessly on behalf of all the Maine legionnaires to ensure they receive the rights and benefits they have earned from their service.

Maine veterans, both now and for generations to come, will benefit because of Ron's efforts. Through his hard work and dedication, Ron has left a lasting legacy and brought honor and credit to himself, his family, his community, the American Legion and his nation. I have valued his candor, his guidance and his friendship, and I extend my sincere thank you to him for his many years of service on behalf of the veterans of Maine.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CHILD
CARE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2009

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, the rising cost of child care is squeezing working families in these difficult economic times, and the amount of assistance the federal government currently provides to ease the burden of these expenses is inadequate. To address this issue, today I am introducing the Child Care Affordability Act.

A substantial gap exists between what high-quality early care and education programs cost and what most families can afford to pay. The average cost of full-time care for one child in a child care center is about \$13,000 per year in urban areas—nearly one quarter of the typical family's income. The amount of assistance that the typical family can receive from the current federal credit for child care expenses is limited to \$600 for one child and \$1,200 for two children. The Child Care Affordability Act helps families to fill that gap so that more of America's children will experience high-quality child care and early education settings.

The Child Care Affordability Act of 2009 acts on two fronts. First, it creates a new tax deduction for child and dependent care expenses. Much of a so-called "martini lunch" is currently a tax-deductible business expense, while child care is not. But for the typical family, child care is a very necessary expense for being able to work. Second, the bill expands the current credit for child and dependent care expenses so that it provides a more meaningful level of assistance to families. Families would be able to choose either the deduction or the credit, making the choice that gives them the biggest tax break. A family with median income of \$56,788 and two children could receive as much as \$5,200 in tax assistance.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this initiative to ease the burden on working families while making an essential investment in the future prosperity of our country.